

A True Relation of one Mrs. *Jane Farrer's* of *Stebbin* in *Essex*, being Possess'd with the DEVIL With the manner of her being dispossess'd, and of the Devil's carrying away the Roof of the Meeting-house in a High Wind, where they were praying with her.

Written by Mr. *WILLIAM CLARK*, of *Shadwel*, one of the Ministers of the Gospel who was then praying with her.



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A true Relation, &c.

IN August 1700, I then living at *Witbam* in *Essex*, gave a Visit to one of my People at *Post Hall*, about a Mile and half from the Town aforesaid; and just upon my departure thence, the Gentlewoman required a Favour of me, which she told me must not be deny'd; which was as follows. 'Sir, I have a Sister that hath been possessed by the Devil for these 12 months now past, and there hath been several days of Fasting and Prayer upon her account, but hitherto to no purpose; yet nevertheless next *Thursday* there is to be another Day of Prayer, at *Stebbin* in *Essex*, 12 Miles distant from this Place (for there was the Place of her Abode with her Father) where several Ministers will be engag'd in that Work; I therefore desire that you would be pleas'd to make one among them.

To whom I reply'd, that it cou'd not be, for I was oblig'd by promise to meet with several Ministers at *Ingerstone*, on *Wednesday* next; whereupon with a few more Words we parted: But on the *Wednesday* following when I went to take Horse in order for *Ingerstone*, my Horse was run away (the which Providence I took notice of as from the Lord) whereupon finding my Heart inclin'd to satisfy the request of the aforesaid Gentlewoman, I sent word (upon condition she wou'd provide me an Horse) I wou'd go with her to *Stebbin*: The which was done, and being provided with Horses, we proceeded on our Journey to the Town aforesaid, a Place that I had never seen or heard of before, nor had any one of the Town seen or heard of me before that solemn Occasion; and yet there was Intelligence given of me by the Possessed, as I was that morning coming thither; her Words were these: *This day is a Solemn Day of Fasting upon my account: I have an Host within me, and you have also an Host to engage against me, but the Head of your Host will not come* (meaning Mr. *Ninchman* of *Braunry*, who himself knew nothing to the contrary till that morning) but another black Monkey (for so she always call'd the Ministers) *will come in his room, and he will pray twice, and he will do me the mischief.* The which fill'd the People both with Wonder and Expectation.

Within a little while after this Prediction we made the Town, and in the middle thereof, at a little distance from me, I saw coming towards me a boarded Cart (what the Country People call a *Tumbrel*) with a numerous Croud of People about it; at which sight I first concluded that the People might be performing something custo-

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mary with them at that Season of the year, but when I came near the side thereof I heard a horrid and dreadful Voice cry out, *Here he is, I'll tear him all in pieces.* It seems they had gotten the Possess'd in this Tumbrel, and were bringing of her from her Father's House to the Meetinghouse, distant about a mile and a half. The reason why she was brought after this manner was, because her violent Agitations and stubborn Postures which she would sometimes be put into, which rendred her uncapable of sitting an Horse; and indeed her Postures have been so obstinate, that all the power and strength of those five or six strong Men, were but as Bands of burnt Flax; for when those men have been upon her, she hath been raised upright without moving or bending any Joint, and they have dropt off her like Straws. At another time she got out of their hands and outran them all (as well she might when the Devil drove) and threw herself forward down a steep Precipice, at the bottom of which was a very deep Water, in which she must inevitably have perish'd, but that she was thrown back again upon her Back, by an invisible hand.

But to return to the Tumbrel; this is very observable, that when this Person roar'd out, she saw me not, for she lay upon her Face, kept down by 5 or 6 men, and they thought her to be asleep. I knew not what to make of those Words, *here he is, I'll tear him in pieces,* but the People who heard her words in the morning knew the meaning thereof, and that I was the Person she had spoken of; and by that time I had put up my Horse, they had gotten her to the Meetinghouse and were all seated, about 400 Souls: But upon my entrance into the Meeting house, I innocently stept into the Pew where the Possessed was, not knowing who was there; upon which she arises and comes toward me, repeating the same words again, *Here he is, I'll tear him in pieces;* but was prevented by those men, who pull'd her down by main force. Upon which I perceiving the People to be put into a great disorder, withdrew my self and went into the Pew that leads to the Pulpit; upon which one *Mr. Jennings* of *Cambridge-shire* went up and pray'd; all which time her Agitations [of Body] were violent beyond expression; I verily thought she would have beat out her Brains on those that held her, and her Words were horrid and Blasphemous. After *Mr. Jennings* came down, I went up, and prefac'd my Prayer with a Word of Exhortation to the People to join heartily in the Duty following, on that solemn Account: While I was praying, she in a most violent manner cry'd out, *Pull him down, he's a Murderer, I can't bear him, my Kingdom's going; my Footstep's Slipping:* with many strange and blasphemous Words, repeating what she spake three times. While I was praying, and she blaspheming, I heard the People under me say she never was so violent

sent before ; upon which that Word fell upon my Heart, Rev. 12. 12. The Devil is come down among you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time ; and upon mentioning of those Words in prayer, a sudden Storm of Wind arose, which blew away part of the Roof of the Meeting-house. The Dogs that were there, ran howling out of the Meeting, as tho' themselves were possess'd, which brought to my mind that Passage of the possess'd Swine ; and an universal Fright so seiz'd the People, that they groan'd as tho' they were expiring ; yea, and in that very moment, the possess'd Person, throwing her Head down in her Bosom, and foaming at the mouth, immediately reviv'd, and came to her perfect Sences, and so continues to this day : Upon this hearing the People under me say, she is come to her self. I drew to a Conclusion, and came down and went into the Pew where she was, and taking her by the hand, said, *Child, how is it ?* who answer'd, *the better for you* To whom I said, *I am nothing, give the Glory to God ;* and then return'd to my Pew again. After which several Ministers both pray'd and preach'd, and upon the result of all, the afflicted sent this Request to me, *That I wou'd go up and return Thanks.* The which I did and so was fulfill'd that forementioned Prediction, That I should *pray twice ;* which finish'd our awful Work, For indeed so it was for what with the Noise of the Woman (or rather the Devil) the sudden storm of Wind, the Cries and Groans of the frighted People and the Yelling of the Dogs, I thought it one of the most solemn Seasons that ever I saw.

The Persons Name was *Jane Farrer*, the Daughter of *James Farrer* of *Stebbin* in *Essex*, but now the Wife of *James Smith* of *Hatfield Peveral* in *Essex*, and was then about 21 or 22 Years of Age ; of gross Sanguine Complexion and somewhat robust, and I have not the least Reason to think her an Impostor, who in this Case had no Eye either to Credit or Interest ; for her Father was a man of Substance and so far were they from receiving any money, that they were a great charge in receiving those who came to Visit her ; and as it was a Charge, so it was a matter of Scandal to the Family.

This I assert for a Truth, and altho' the Story of it seems to be very large, yet I have been as concise as possible, and yet faithful in the Relation thereof ; for tho' I have omitted many Circumstances. yet nothing of Moment, that is within the reach of my own Knowledge.

William Clark

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